

Hence the ancient  
 Mexicans, conceiving- the  
 maize as a  
 personal being who went  
 through the whole course  
 of life  
 between seed-time and  
 harvest, sacrificed new-  
 born babes  
 when the maize was  
 sown, older children when  
 it had  
 sprouted, and so on till it  
 was fully ripe, when they  
 sacri-  
 ficed old men.<sup>1</sup> A name for  
 Osiris was the "crop" or  
 "harvest";<sup>2</sup> and the  
 ancients sometimes  
 explained him as  
 a personification of the  
 corn.<sup>3</sup>

## § 2. Osiris a Tree- Spirit

But Osiris was more than a  
 spirit of the corn ; he was  
 Osiris a:  
 also a tree-spirit, and  
 this may perhaps have  
 been his tree'sp"  
 primitive character, since the  
 worship of trees is naturally  
 older In the history of  
 religion than the worship  
 of the  
 cereals. However that  
 may have been, to an  
 agricultural  
 people like the Egyptians, who  
 depended almost wholly on  
 their crops, the corn-god was  
 naturally a far more important

<sup>1</sup> Herrera, quoted  
 by A. Bastian,  
*Die Cultur der  
 Menschheit in Amerika*  
 (Berlin, 1878), ii.  
 639 ; id., *General  
 History of the  
 vast Continent  
 and  
 Islands of America*,  
 translated by Capt.  
 J. Stevens (London,  
 1725-26), ii. 379  
*sq.* (whose version of  
 the passage is

inadequate).  
 Compare Brasseur  
 de  
 Fourbourg, *Histoire  
 des nations civi-  
 lisées du Mexique  
 et de l'Amérique  
 Centrale* (Paris,  
 1857-59), i. 327, iii.

5<sup>251</sup>

<sup>2</sup> E. Lefebure, *Le  
 mythe Osirien*  
 (Paris, 1874-75), p.  
 188.

<sup>3</sup> Firmicus Maternus,,

De errore pro-  
 fanarum religionum,  
 2, "Dej"en-  
 sores eorum volunt  
 addere physicam  
 rationem, frugum  
 semina Qsirim  
 dicentes esse<sup>^</sup> him  
 terram, Tyfonem  
 calorem: et quia  
 maturatae fruges  
 calore ad vitam  
 hominim colliguntur  
 et dimsae a terras  
 consortio separantur  
 et rursus  
 adpropinquant hieine  
 semi-  
 nantur; hanc  
 volant esse  
 mortem  
 Osiridis, cum frug&s  
 recondunt, in-  
 vent ionem vero,  
 cum fruges genitali  
 terrae fomento  
 conceptae annua  
 rursus  
 coeperint procreatione  
 generari." Ter-  
 tullian, Adversus  
 Mardonem, i. 13,  
 \*\* Sic et Osiris quod  
 semper sepelitur

et in mvido quacritur et  
 cum gatidio  
 invenitur, reciprocarum  
 frugum et  
 vidoTiim ekmentororum  
 et recidivi anni  
 fidem argumentantur"  
 Plutarch, Isis  
 et Osiris, 65, ourw 5e  
 icai rots iroXXols  
 /cat fiopriKOts  
 emxeipri(rojLLev, ei're  
 ralsr  
 Ka9' &pav (j.€TCLJ3o\cus  
 tov Trepi^oyTOS  
 ei're TCUS KapTT&v -  
 yev^Gcn Kal criropats  
 Kal apdrois xat'poucrtr rd  
 Trepl TOI)s deads

da-TTeffOai fJL^v "Qcrtpiv  
 6're /cptfTrerat rj  
 7^ ffTreipbfjievos 6  
 /cap7r6s» aS^cs 5' dfa-  
 J3t.ov(j8ai /cat  
 ava<paivecrdai. Sre /SXacr-  
 r^crew? apxtf- Eusebius,  
 Praeparatio  
 Evangelii, iii. ii. 31, 6 of  
 "Ocrtpts Trap'  
 AlyvTrriois rr\ v KdpTn^ov  
 Tra/jtW^cri  
 dtvajjuiv, rjv dpfivoLS  
 aTro/xetXtVcrovrat ets  
 yty afiavtfajMtyyv iv r\$  
 arrbpip Kal u(p'  
 m\*&v KCLTavaXtcfKO^vriv  
 ets rds rpo<pds.  
 Athenagoras,  
 Supplicatio pro Christia-  
 nis, 22, pp. 112, 114  
 ed. J. C. T.  
 Otto, rd fe <rrot%eta Kal  
 rd /u,6pta avr&v  
 OeoTroLOUfflv, dtXXore ctXXa  
 6vi>fjia,ra avrols  
 Tr^cfoi, T7)v fJLev  
 TQV #TOV #TCQp&v  
 "QvipLV (odev ipacrl  
 /JLVCTTLKUS eirl rrj  
 avevpeffGL r&v /xeXa)3/  
 r) rQv KapTrf>v  
 rri "Icndi •

. See also the  
 passage of  
 Cornutus quoted  
 above, vol. i. p. 229,  
 note <sup>2</sup>.